

Illinois Early Learning Council (IELC)
Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Committee Meeting
Wednesday December 2, 2009
9:30-Noon
St. Augustine College

MINUTES

ATTENDING: Josie Yanguas (IL Resource Center, LCDC Co-chair), Sonia Soltero (DePaul), Harriette Herrera (PENCELLS and DePaul), Rebecca Lawrence (DCFS – Educational Advisor), Jessica Dugan (Positive Parenting DuPage), Francesca Alcozer (DePaul), Reyna Hernandez (Latino Policy Forum, LCDC staffer), Luisiana Melendez (Erikson Institute), Karen McCarthy (ISBE), Pat Chamberlain (UIC), Judy Yturriago (Northeastern Illinois University), Joyce Weiner (Ounce of Prevention), Marta Moya-Leang (CPS Belmont-Cragin Early Childhood Center), Brenda Arksey (Chinese American Service League), Maria Vargas (St. Augustine), Dean Lee Maltby (St. Augustine), Bruno Bondavalli (St. Augustine), Candace Williams (Positive Parenting DuPage), Marina Escamilla (CPS Early Childhood),

BY PHONE: Joyce Bezdicek (Urbana Dist. 116), Patty Oji (Chicago Coalition of Site Administered Child Care Programs)

1. Introductions – Welcome by St. Augustine Dean of Academic Affairs, Bruno Bondavalli, Dean Lee Maltby, and Maria Vargas.
2. Review and Approval of Minutes:
 - a. Corrected spelling of “Yturriago” and changed “Type 29 test” to “Type 29 application”
 - b. Approved with changes
3. Workforce Recommendations Update:
 - a. The recommendations were presented at the October IELC meeting
 - i. These recommendations happened to take place at the same time as the IELC discussion of the proposed rule amendments extending bilingual services to preschool programs, which probably added some confusion to the discussion.
 1. Questions arose about whether these recommendations were in response to the rules.
 2. The joint Workforce Diversity Workgroup (joint between the Linguistic and Cultural Diversity and Workforce Development Committees) met for a year to address best practices for kids and develop the recommendations.
 3. The discussions initiated after the submission of similar recommendations to changes in the Preschool for All RFP over a year ago.
 - ii. The recommendations were accepted with 11 abstentions
 - b. Generally, these recommendations are intended to encourage early childhood and bilingual teacher preparation programs to develop and modify courses and programs to integrate both areas
 - i. Various committees have addressed Type 29 teachers as a pool of potential candidates for type 04 early childhood certification

- ii. We want to reach out to higher education, holding meetings on campuses as part of that effort, because of the need for higher education to be responsive.
 - iii. These recommendations are not actually changes in policy, but more so in practice.
 - iv. One concern is that higher education changes take time.
- 4. ELL Pre-K Proposed Rule Changes – Amendments to Sections 228 and 235
 - a. Generally:
 - i. The full text is available online
 - ii. There are changes since the initial rules:
 - 1. Programs can use alternative screeners
 - 2. All students are rescreened at Kindergarten
 - b. General consensus that proposed rules and workforce recommendations improve the quality of early childhood education
 - i. People have gotten very positive feedback about these rules from the community
 - ii. The same types of discussions about the difficulty in building workforce arose when the state bilingual law passed in the 1970's and when the Type 04 early childhood certification requirements arose.
 - iii. We should consider the special education approach of determining children's educational needs first and then developing the resources
 - iv. Concern that these changes in the state's preschool policy cannot be delayed any further and have been in the pipeline for a long time.
 - v. There is growing national support for early childhood, particularly coming from the U.S. Department of Education. Arne Duncan gave a keynote address at the NAEYC conference, and was only the second Secretary of Education to do so. Also, when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is reauthorized, it may be renamed to include early childhood.
 - vi. States around the country are trying to figure out what to do around the issue of English language learners in early childhood. Illinois has incorporated this issue into the ARRA Early Learning Council Grant Application through two key relevant workforce recommendations:
 - 1. Expanding Gateways Scholarships – tuition and books
 - a. For bilingual/ESL coursework
 - b. Also for part-year staff
 - c. (only available for currently working practitioners)
 - 2. Higher Ed Institutes – at least two intensive ones
 - a. For early childhood and bilingual faculty to have access to speakers and to incorporate information
 - b. Intended to build a cadre of cross-specialized faculty
 - c. Discussed various concerns that have arisen related to the unintended consequences of the proposed rules:
 - i. Professional Development Implications
 - 1. higher education will take time to respond and begin producing dually certified teachers.
 - a. NEIU is already discussing the impact of the rules at that institution

2. the impact of the rules on non-school district early childhood programs which have varied needs and varied funding streams, considering that these rules will apply to programs that are school-district administered, including those which receive funding directly from CPS
 - a. There are some creative ways that programs can utilize their staff to meet the new requirements.
3. the complexities for particular language groups in procuring teachers
4. providing appropriate supports to programs to help them develop their workforces
 - a. When there have been other changes in teacher requirements, teacher unions and the state have traditionally provided resources for teachers.
- ii. Screener: screener and assessments are English-only and there are no native language assessments
 1. WIDA is developing the new screener, but it is only in development stage.
 2. There will be an opportunity to collect data between the Pre-IPT and the MODEL results
 3. Not screening and assessing the native language results in unequal treatment of ELLs, informs instruction, implies an English-only educational priority
- iii. Some providers are concerned about possibly losing funding if they are unable to comply, and may not know that with similar implementations of heightened requirements in the past, ISBE has been flexible with providers
- iv. Parents need more information about bilingual education and how the process works so they can make informed decisions for their children
- v. The new, higher exit requirements will help ensure that students remain in the program long enough to fully develop their language abilities, because research shows that it takes many years to learn a language – particularly at an academic level.
- d. Comments are due by February 15. This group will prepare a comment, including some of the concerns. Other groups should send letters as well.
 - i. Suggestions that this group recommend exempting community-based organizations or recommend that the rules apply uniformly to avoid a discrepancy in quality, that LCDC encourage flexibility in the administration of the rules, and offer options for associate's level teachers
- e. Groups should also begin to think about the state budget
 - i. We are expecting at least a \$1B deficit to fund education at last year's levels, which already included a 30% cut to the ISBE budget from FY09 levels. Further, it was discussed at the last IELC meeting that all of the ECBG funds in FY09 were paid for with federal stimulus money and not with state funds, which can have some implications for the new budget cycle
 - ii. Even if they passed a tax increase now, the reduced revenue because of the delay would still require significant cuts

- iii. There will be a budget hearing in Mundelein: Dec. 9th, 6-8pm, Lincoln School, 200 W Maple
 - iv. The ISBE Board is considering discussing budget at the next meeting
- 5. Next Steps and Committee Projects
 - a. Potential projects
 - i. A handbook or resource toolkit for programs which are implementing new preschool bilingual programs.
 - ii. A training or bilingual 101 for early childhood providers and advocates may be useful
 - 1. It could be integrated into the summer higher education institutes
 - iii. Developing a website with resources for preschools working with ELLs
 - 1. Gateways to Opportunity and INCCRRA websites already include some of this information
 - 2. We need a dedicated website or centralize resources on an existing site
 - iv. Outreach of this information through (including support with the new rules):
 - 1. Multilingual Chicago – which started 40 years ago to promote world languages
 - 2. Professional conferences to targeted professionals including administrators and support staff
 - 3. Newsletters
 - v. Promote targeted scholarships to meet the new need
 - vi. Parent Outreach: Webinar, fact sheet, bilingual parent conference, something like that
- 6. The Workforce Diversity Workgroup has planned a higher education panel at the CMAEYC Opening Minds Conference to address the ELL-EC workforce
 - a. Wednesday Dec. 16th at 1pm,
 - b. Planning a panel discussion with reps of various higher ed programs about what they're doing
 - c. Faculty members who are not attending opening minds but want to participate, may do so without registering
 - d. Latino Policy Forum will also be presenting on advocating for Latinos and ELLs in early childhood and will discuss rules.
 - e. The Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute has done some work around the workforce issue¹
- 7. Next Meetings:
 - a. February 3rd, 9:30-12:00, Roosevelt University (tentatively)
 - b. April 7th, 9:30-12:00, UIC (tentatively)
 - c. Joint Workforce Diversity, Jan 20, 9:30am (St. Augustine, 9:30-11:30)
 - d. January 14th, Positive Parenting DuPage – Conference - Naperville

¹ Preparing Early Childhood Teachers for Multicultural Classrooms:
<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~snapshots/Snap58.pdf>